A BOOK FOR TODAY

# Foreign View of Kennedy Probe

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By JEREMIAH O'LEARY

THE OSWALD AFFAIR: An Examination of the Contradictions and Ommissions of the Warren Report.' By Leo Sauvage. The World Publishing Co. 418 pages. $6.95.

The correspondent for Le Figaro in the United States has two sentiments about the way things are in America that may partly explain his disbelief in the findings of the Warren Commission.

About the U.S. press, he writes: "Personally, I don't see why it should be necessary for a reporter to limit himself to reproducing dispassionately everything said or done as if nothing affected him, leaving all comment to the editorial writers."

About the U.S. concept of courtroom justice: "Americans do have a rather extreme concept of the required impartiality of jurors; foreign correspondents who sat through the selection of the jury in the Ruby trial marveled at the procedure. It seemed to them that the perfect juror would be the village idiot who never read a newspaper, never listened to the radio or watched TV (except soap operas). . . ."

Perhaps this American correspondent might be permitted to observe that Lee Oswald was handled with considerably more circumspection by the Dallas police in connection with the murder of Kennedy than he would have been in Paris. He was not, in fact, charged with Kennedy's murder but with that of Policeman J. D. Tippit. The French people live with the Code Napoleon under which a suspect is presumed guilty until proven innocent.

It is also a fact of life that French newspapers are fairly free in labeling suspects as guilty parties in criminal cases while American newspapers in general adhere closely to the language of warrants, indictments and quoted statements by responsible officials. If Sauvage's theory that U.S. newspapers should speculate on the guilt or innocence of parties in criminal cases is valid, would that not be even more reason to seek out juries that have not formed any opinion or read that of others about the facts involved?

Sauvage's book, like all the others, demonstrates an incredible facility at hair-splitting.

Item: Sauvage is fascinated by the chicken bones found near the window from which the death shot was fired at Kennedy and believes they could have been left there by an accomplice. But the commission identified the building employe who ate the chicken and left the bones.

Item: Sauvage questions that the rifle allegedly used by Oswald was capable of being fired with accuracy at a moving target in 5 or 6 seconds. But tests at the FBI laboratory proved that such a thing was possible. And it is important to point out again that although three shots were fired, the first bullet clearly could have been loaded and locked long before the target came into view. Therefore, the stop-watch starts with the pulling of a trigger and only two movements of the bolt had to follow the first shot.

Item: Sauvage claims a number of essential witnesses to the murder of Policeman Tippit were never interviewed. But the commission heard 13 witnesses to that slaying, including two eyewitnesses. All identified Oswald.

Item: Sauvage makes much of the idea that since Oswald did not order ammunition when he bought the assassination rifle, it therefore was not a lethal weapon "since an unloaded weapon is not a lethal weapon." The FBI laboratory established that the rifle Oswald bought fired the shots that killed Kennedy and that his palm-print was on the weapon.

It is Sauvage's conclusion that the assassination was the result of a plot by racial extremists, that Oswald was their instrument and that Jack Ruby was assigned to be Oswald's executioner, possibly by a separate group of plotters.

Any reasonable person is entitled to wonder about genuine mysteries, notably that Oswald died without confessing and that no one saw him fire the shots that killed Kennedy. But it is strange for a Frenchman to find nothing in the evidence to show that Oswald was the assassin and to contend that any uncertainty should be interpreted to the advantage of the accused.

Napoleon would not have liked that idea at all.

I object when the critics depart from challenging evidence and come up with theories of plots that are totally the products of their imaginations. Sauvage is entitled to applause for the skill with which he demolishes the first in the series of critics, Communist-line American expatriate Thomas Buchanan.

It is such a masterful dissection of an irresponsible pipedream that it is difficult to comprehend that the same author (Sauvage) can postulate his own weird theory.

If Sauvage is right, why wouldn't it have been necessary to get rid of Ruby? I know Ruby could have killed Oswald several times on the night of the President's death because I brushed elbows with him several times as Oswald was led in and out of the Homicide Squad. It would have been easier in the turmoil created by the press mob in the hall than it was on the Sunday morning when Ruby did fire the fatal shot.

If Oswald had to be silenced, why would Sauvage's plotters have waited nearly 48 hours? I believe with the Warren Commission that Oswald was the lone assassin because I have read all of the evidence and prefer to accept it, even with its missing factors, to the dreamed-up theories of Sauvage, Mark Lane, et al.

DeLoach
Mohr
Wick
Casper
Callahan
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Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

F. Thompson

Very well done Lou

O'Leary

file

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The Washington Evening Star
New York Daily News
New York Herald Tribune
New York Post
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